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Contributory Causes of Aboriginal Depopulation in Western Australia[1] *By A. O. Neville, F.C.I.S. (Lond.), formerly Commissioner for Native Affairs, Western Australia.*

Writing in his journal in 1848, only sixteen years after the founding of Western Australia, John Edward Eyre, the explorer, made this entry:

> " It is an undeniable fact that wherever European colonies have been established in Australia, the native races in that neighbourhood are rapidly decreasing, and already in some of the older settlements, have totally disappeared."

Eyre then goes on to refer to the manner in which our very presence in the country infringed upon the preserves of the Aborigines and led to their dissolution. This of course has been stressed over and over again by research workers, missionaries, clergy and interested laity, though it is only partly true. Most of the factors governing the impact of our occupation of the country upon its indigenous people are well known to us and need not be stressed here, but it is my intention to point out some less known features which largely contributed towards it.

Later in his diary Eyre refers to the " degree of injury our presence *unavoidably* inflicts " upon the Aborigines and I think that word " unavoidably " contains the germ impregnating the whole unfortunate contact. Our forebears here at all events did try to do right, they were " unavoidably " and hopelessly ignorant of the science of man as applied to the strange people they had newly encountered. They had never known such people before and had no precedents to help them. They tried kindness and conciliation and failed. They defended themselves, their flocks and crops with force, only to make matters worse because to kill meant more killing in return. In desperation they went so far as to extend full British citizenship to those seemingly irresponsible people only to find their laws utterly disregarded in favour of immutable practices dating from prehistoric times.

Missionary effort was not lacking, for within a few years of the founding of the colony the Church Missionary Society, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the West Australian Missionary Society and the Swan River Mission were at work in the south-west, not only preaching but teaching too. The Wesleyans made a valiant effort in 1841 which continued for some fourteen years. The Roman Catholics first founded New Norcia in 1846,

[1] This paper was read before Section F, Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science, Perth, 1947.

fighting against great difficulties. All these efforts more or less failed for various reasons seen in retrospect as "unavoidable," and mainly through ignorance of the nature of the people for whose benefit they were designed.

We should be grateful that there were to be found in so small a community earnest souls ready to devote their time and means to the cause of the Aborigines, for in those days our people numbered but three thousand, while according to Professor Radcliffe-Brown there were between fifty-two and fifty-five thousand Aborigines in Western Australia when we established ourselves here in 1827. In the Perth area the adjacent tribes numbered about one thousand people. Captain Stirling, who became Lieut.-Governor in 1828 and our first Governor in 1834, estimated the native population of the Colony at one native to two square miles. He was of course only concerned with the then known and partly settled areas of the fertile south-west and his guess was probably a good one as regards that area. On Stirling's reckoning there should then have been a population of 12,500 blacks in the south-west alone. Yet within seventy-two years of the Colony's establishment all except eight hundred of the full-bloods of the south-west had disappeared, while six hundred odd half-castes had appeared on the scene. The full-bloods of the south-west have all gone now, but their coloured descendants number almost five thousand.

I must refer briefly to the effect of the impact of our race upon the Aborigines of the south-west. The price paid by the blacks was the same here as in Tasmania but the methods involved were very different. As we know, Tasmania deliberately destroyed her indigenous people within the first seventy years of her colonial life. Here in Western Australia in those early years there was little deliberate cruelty. As regards the very early days of the Colony I am prepared at any time to defend our forebears against such a charge, or the accusation that they desired to wipe out the natives they found often seriously opposed to them. Indeed much effort was vainly expended in preserving the race in the hope of bringing it to a useful state of life, that is to our way of life. That such efforts were misplaced and mistaken is patent and provides another story, but the will was there and to a very considerable extent.

The demise of the native race in the south-west was due to what I should like to call a concatenation of circumstances, a linking together of cause and effect.

In 1830 occurred the first shooting of a black. He was found robbing a garden on the Swan, and this incident led to most of the following reprisals, gradually extending in scope and severity.

The pressure of settlement on a land grant system forced the blacks farther and farther from their home fires, waters and sacred places. It destroyed family life and wrecked the social system throughout. There were no native protective laws in those early days and liquor was freely and impartially distributed. Wages were partly paid in rum. The convict system contributed to the debacle. Ticket-of-leave men roaming the bush helped in the further demoralization of an already detribalized people. Food both for white and black was often difficult to obtain, the Colonists being dependent upon spasmodic transport by sea for their main supplies. The bush, in all its defiant splendour, faced the settler and needed to be dealt with before he could grow food for himself and family, let alone the natives. But the black expected to share and share alike. Was he not a British subject and subject to British laws? If he did not get what he wanted, he stole and suffered punishment. Failing to adapt himself to our way of life he could not live his own.

The whole of the south-west corner of this State was originally occupied by the Bibbulmen people, who though they were primitive were neither cruel nor fierce. They were a homogenous group divided into two main classes or phratries, the members of which could intermarry, but neither could marry within itself on pain of death. They dwelt in family groups beside permanent waters each having its group totem belonging to that permanent water.

In the south-west to-day every creek and waterhole retains its native name, the meaning of which indicates the totem of its erstwhile possessors. The groups had their well-defined *wonnies* or areas within which they might roam, but beyond which, except for ceremonial visits, they could not venture. Thus did they respect each other's food supplies until the coming of the white settler completely destroyed the system and so began their dissolution.

These simple, peace-loving and gentle people, though there were of course some notable exceptions, differed from those in other parts of Western Australia in that they did not practice the rites of initiation and man-making in the manner indulged in by other tribes outside their country, notably circumcision and subincision. They got along very well without these drastic measures. They lived clean lives, and their bodies were well developed due to ample food supplies. They were experts in hunting and fishing and indulged in games designed to exhibit their prowess and improve their physique. In the matter of punishment they were stoical, but not homicidal. What a tragedy that this people could not have been preserved to become a valued asset and eventually secure an honoured place in the life of the State. Years ago I witnessed the passing of the last of the Bibbulmen. The few full-bloods now in the south-west have come from outside this district.

There was something else which contributed to the depopulation of the south-west, though its influence was in operation long before our time and we whites are in no way responsible for its evil effects. I refer to the inroads made upon the Bibbulmen people by the tough, more savage and turbulent folk from the east and south-east. While we have little to go upon, it seems clear that the influence which these inland people had upon the coastal tribes was far-reaching. They were attracted from the dryer areas, where food gathering was difficult and where they had to work their savage science to good effect to enable them to live at all, to the well watered coastal areas even as far north as Broome, where living was much easier. I do not think they came in great numbers but in small parties and individually. There is no doubt the coastal people feared them greatly. The old men of the south-west used to tell me of them with bated breath. They said these raiders were evil men and meat eaters and that they stole their women and disrupted family life so that in course of time the people became " mootch," that is decadent through unlawful mating. By meat eating they meant the consumption of human flesh which was abhorrent to these simple people of the south-west. Even to-day men from the east are detested and ostracized by the coastal people and occasionally I had to have them ejected from the camps, where they invariably caused trouble by interfering with the women. No doubt too in the old days the inland people sought to impose their man-making rites upon the youth of the Bibbulmen against their will and to their detriment.

So much for the south-west. Settlement of the vast areas beyond was of a progressive nature. It began at a later date and was undertaken by far fewer people. Those early pioneers who pushed out into the vast interior were hardy, courageous souls and not deliberately cruel. They needed the services of the natives to guide them and tend their

flocks and herds. They had to defend their lives and possessions at times when mutual misunderstandings arose, and these led to other incidents of a like nature.

It was through no deliberate action on the part of these early settlers that depopulation accompanied pastoral settlement, but it is a fact that the main industries of the north, the pastoral, pearling and mining industries, have all contributed to it, though often indirectly and unwittingly. The story of this initial settlement is much the same here as elsewhere in Australia except that there is less evidence of what we may call mass killings which are alleged to have taken place in some other mainland colonies.

It is most probable that stories of what had happened to their people in the south had filtered through to the natives of the middle north and north, and this would account for some of the more violent opposition met with by a few of those whites who first ventured out into the unknown interior. Exploring parties which avoided clashes with the natives were spying out the land, but venturesome and less considerate souls followed in their wake. Accompanying settlement, there came men of a different type to whom native life and culture meant little, and who used and abused the native people to their hearts' content, sometimes meeting death as the result. But there were a few ugly incidents in the pre-settlement days and I have no doubt the perpetrators of these outrages really believed their lives to be in danger, they being few and the natives many.

For ten years following 1870 there was much disturbance of the native way of life, and its cause is attributable to the establishment of the main industries of the great north of the colony I have referred to. By the time law and order decided to take a firmer hand, the damage had been done.

But let us look for a moment at the available estimates of native life in these areas. Dr. Elkin thinks that when we came here there were 10,600 Aborigines in Kimberley alone, that is the area north of 17° S. As late as 1900 there were no reliable figures but the State's total native population was then given as 12,307, not including East Kimberley and those outside civilization—significant omissions.

My own estimate in 1916 gave 13,000 natives then known to us. In the following year I made it approximately 14,600 and reported 1,000 more males than females and only 1,288 children, this including some " castes."

In both these years I had noted that within civilization there were few children as compared with those still living in the bush. The latter I described as " numerous." Since then we have established a more accurate system of enumeration and our full-blood people living within civilization to-day are said to number 10,891. Of these, there are 1,475 more male than female adults, and only 1,788 children to 9,103 adults. A recent survey found that in an area where pastoral stations predominated, in Queensland, I believe, bush women bore 2·5 children as compared with 1·6 of those born on stations.

But the Western Australian published figures still include a possible 10,000 natives " beyond the influence of civilization." I fear that estimate is too high. We cannot locate those large numbers and expeditions into the still unsettled areas, mainly to seek out the supposed sick, have not located them. To-day, within the whole vast area north of a point just below Shark Bay and stretching due east to the South Australian border, there are known to be 8,497 full-blood Aborigines. We must add a figure representing the more or less mythical nomads, so let us assess the total at 10,000. For 1829, 20,000 would be a

conservative estimate. If this number remained static prior to our occupation, then since we first pushed northwards there has been a decline of 50% in the Aboriginal population within the area referred to. There has never been any accurate record kept of births and deaths, and counting heads has been our only method of enumeration.

The finding of the first pearls in north-west waters in 1851 marked the beginning of a desperate phase for the Aborigines. The export of pearl shell began in 1862, and natives continued to be employed in the industry until well into the 1900's, though in the later years they were not employed as divers. The diving dress was first used here in 1912, and its use was followed by measures for the prevention of diver's paralysis, brought about by deep diving. So our natives, for years the only labour available, were used from the first and for many years thereafter for skin diving in deep waters. Some women were also employed, but the men and boys were usually the divers. Lads were signed-on under an indenture system which was wholly one-sided, and many of them were mere children.

In 1874 there were five hundred divers engaged in the industry—mostly Aborigines. Later, Malays, who were better in depths, were taken on to replace the women, and by 1903 there were only some sixty Aborigines still engaged in the industry and nearly seven hundred Japanese and over a thousand Malays as well. With the Asiatics came a marked increase in drunkenness amongst Aborigines and the prostitution of their women—indeed a scandalous state of affairs arose.

The pearling industry was a flourishing and lucrative one in the early days, no less than four hundred luggers being so engaged at one time. Abuses accompanied the employment of Aborigines and it is beyond doubt that many suffered and died in the cause of the white man. The pearling grounds were so far from the seat of government and communication so difficult and infrequent in those days that anything could happen, and did happen, before the authorities heard of it. Of course belated inquiries were instituted which gradually effected improvement until the time when Aborigines were no longer required. Many people in Perth were naturally financially interested in these early ventures in the north and were reluctant to impede progress by a too ready acceptance of stories of hardship, which indeed might be and were sometimes exaggerated, and it must be remembered that the claims of the natives were not then recognized as they are to-day.

Bad though it was, the actual employment of the Aborigines was not so dreadful as the manner of their recruitment. Armed parties scoured the adjacent mainland coastal areas in order to secure native labour. They rounded up the blacks at the point of the gun and seized all they thought suitable for the trade, and tribal or family affiliations were ignored. The victims were chained and led away to what was to them little less than slavery. In the hope of regulating matters, the Government established a receiving depôt for these workers, in the care of an official, on the Lacepede Islands lying some thirty miles west of Broome. This was not a success. One or two police stations were belatedly established in strategic positions in the hope of checking this illicit traffic. From the Lacepedes, the natives were shipped to the pearling grounds further south off Onslow and Point Sampson. But not all the labour was acquired in this way. Some of the pearlers were interested in pastoral pursuits and combined this with pearling, using their natives in both industries, and many of these masters were humane men.

As in pearling, so in the case of pastoral settlement the governments of the day, in their desire to assist progress and settlement, made grievous mistakes having fearful reper-

cussions on the lives of the blacks. There was no deliberate intention of hurting the blacks, the idea was rather to teach them to behave and become useful.

The settlement of the north-west was coincident with the pearling industry, but pastoral settlement in the Kimberleys did not begin until 1882, and some three years later gold was found at Hall's Creek which led to a temporary rush and further inroads by the whites. While the north-west was mostly suited to sheep raising, the Kimberleys were largely devoted to cattle. However, the natives resented the intrusion of the white man and, through sheer hunger, often wantonly killed stock in considerable numbers. They had been doing this spasmodically all along in the north-west and had suffered flogging and imprisonment accordingly, but now in the interests of Kimberley pastoralists and no doubt pressed on all hands to do something about it, sterner measures were decided upon by the Government. Natives said to be cattle killers were to be brought to trial, and upon conviction imprisoned up to three years. The police were allowed a per capita monetary allowance for feeding each native brought in. This led to many hundreds of natives being forcibly arrested, brought in and charged with killing. They could be arrested without warrant and largely at the will of the police. Witnesses, mostly the wives of the alleged killers, and young boys from ten years of age upwards were included in the parties, which often numbered from twenty to thirty strong. Time was no object ; weeks on the chain only served to add to the arresting constable's profits. I am not going to dilate upon the abuses of this pernicious system ! Its enormities were the subject of enquiry by a Royal Commission in 1905, but our northern gaols were soon overflowing with blacks both innocent and guilty who were perforce absent from their country for even years at a time, and many were sent south to the prison on Rottnest Island lying off Fremantle. It wasn't long before the Colony was spending over ten thousand pounds yearly in bringing these unfortunates to so-called justice. Many died, and particularly those brought south, where the climate was too cold for them under prison conditions. It was bad enough incarcerating these so-called wrongdoers in the local gaols within their tribal areas, or at least not far from them, but to bring them south to a foreign land as it were, spelled the loss of all their spiritual values, leaving them nothing to look forward to except death. Generally speaking the natives were well treated in gaol, but our people just didn't understand the complexities of their social life and culture. All and sundry were mixed indiscriminately, which meant that deadly enemies might be chained cheek by jowl, and a gaoler often wondered what was the matter with his charges when one or other declined and died without ascertainable cause. Few people even to-day realize what it means to a bush native to be separated from his kith and kin and how he suffers from a nostalgia beyond the comprehension of all but those who really know him.

Following the findings of the Royal Commission previously referred to and because it was realized that the continuation of this process would eventually rob the stations of their workers, now beginning to be badly missed, other measures were instituted which put a stop to these abuses. The old system, which was rotten to the core and was of no effect as a deterrent, eventually gave place to a really humane and successful innovation on the part of the Government, which established cattle stations solely for the native people and where cattle could be reared for their consumption. Where the influence of these places exists to-day cattle killing has ceased to be a matter for any concern. One seldom finds natives incarcerated for cattle killing now where between fifty and sixty years ago there were at times as many as three hundred able-bodied men held in more than one gaol for this offence.

As in the case of pearling, many of these men never returned to their people and many died of illness, heartbreak and despair. Can we wonder, then, that in these years of hardship for the blacks, when so many able-bodied men were torn from their womenfolk, that the birthrate declined alarmingly. The fate of the abandoned women was an unhappy one and could often lead to tragedy should her tribal man return and find her living in unlawful relationship with some other male. Killings unnumbered must have resulted from these detention periods, whether of work on the pearling grounds, imprisonment or forcible separation of any kind. In the earliest days the number of females seems to have nearly equalled the males, but with the opening up of the north there began the rapid decline in females surviving birth that I have already referred to. It may be that the natives themselves, noting some divergence in those areas where the predatory white operated, tried to equalize matters by destroying the female children at birth. The elders saw so many of the lads taken away by the white man and learned to know that some of them would never return. In any case it is obvious that the loss of so many potential fathers must have contributed largely to the declining birthrate and the most ardent invocation of the spirit of conception on the part of the women could not make up the loss.

I now refer to yet another governmental activity which though founded with the best motives and upon professional advice proved to be a costly mistake and a cause of some loss of life. True, death had already marked many of the native people concerned, but numbers were needlessly lost.

In the early nineteen hundreds venereal disease of a type mostly peculiar to natives was said to be prevalent amongst the northern native people. There were then no native hospitals as now. It was decided to establish two, one for males and one for females, on Dorre and Bernier Islands respectively, which lie off our coast opposite Carnarvon. This was in 1906. In order to secure patients to fill these Lock Hospitals, expeditions were organized to travel from station to station to seek out the afflicted. A large number was found at first and sent over the sea to the new hospitals, but later there was difficulty in finding patients and the staffs were far from busy. The fact was that so many deaths occurred that the natives, hearing of this, became scared and fled upon the approach of the examining officers, some to die in the bush. It turned out later that there was not so great an incidence of the disease as was first suggested, but while the experiment lasted it was unfortunate in its results. The natives feared the sea voyage, hated the separation of couples and succumbed sometimes to sheer fright and nostalgia. The disease itself claimed many victims, for in those days curative treatment was far from efficient.

This was a costly experiment indeed in life and money, but it was in keeping with our disregard and ignorance all along of native culture and particularly their inhibitions.

Contrary to assertions made within, and particularly without the State, our natives have on the whole proved to be a healthy, if somewhat under-nourished people.

Mortality records have only been kept since 1915, and though not claiming to be complete, these disclose that senile decay and heart failure have been the greatest individual causes of known deaths, to which no doubt such customs as pointing the bone and the abandonment of the aged have contributed. On the other hand, medical examination has proved that venereal disease has been almost the least contributory cause.

Early records are scarce as to epidemic visitations but we know there were localized outbreaks which through the very manner in which the people were separated by their social

system were usually easily controlled. In our own time we have had serious outbreaks from which, so far as I can find, the resultant mortality including the coloured people has never exceeded one hundred and fifty in any one case.

Many lives have undoubtedly been needlessly lost through the incidence of the more common ailments, cases often being unreported and neglected. This especially applies to infants.

The application of modern medical methods and efficient nursing treatment should increase considerably the " expectation of life " for the Aborigine.

I have tried to show in the foregoing how native life has been disrupted by the forcible removal of so many of its members from their tribal areas, families and house-fires, leading of course to serious depopulation.

I now want to deal with the part played by the native himself in his own dissolution. It would seem that this began long before we occupied the country. In any case the total of three hundred thousand Aboriginal people as estimated by Radcliffe-Brown spread over the whole of Australia seems little enough even though they lived on what nature provided and attempted nothing practical towards turning the land to their own better use. In the bush they have never learned the lesson that before you reap you must sow and that spirit agencies alone have no real increase value.

But were the Aborigines ever a prolific race ? They are certainly not so to-day and, judging by the estimates given us, they were not so at the time of our arrival. For example, the eleven thousand assigned to the well-watered and fruitful State of Victoria seems small even in the case of people living off uncultivated and unstocked land. The same car be said of the other southern States. The area now known as Western Australia, about one-third of the whole Continent, surely could have supported a greater number than fifty-five thousand, the maximum assigned to it by Professor Radcliffe-Brown.

Whatever was the case before our coming here, it is true that since we came they have been indulging in practices calculated in time to wipe them out of existence without any help from us. Moreover much of this has been going on in areas as yet scarcely trodden by the white man, and through no fault or action of his and for which, indeed, he must be held blameless.

Within this State there are still large tracts of land once peopled by numerous Aborigines but unoccupied by us which have become almost depopulated within the past century. Within these areas the Aborigine has worked his savage science to its utmost extent, but nothing has stayed his exodus, and those who have left seldom return to their home-fires.

Ever since we have known them, Aborigines have been killing each other for a variety of reasons, but mainly in a spirit of revenge and at the will of the elders. Breaches of tribal law concerning the possession of women have been a primary cause. The paucity of women, to which I have already referred, has had much to do with this. Death at their own hands or by violence of any kind, even accidental or natural death, has led to retribution to an extent little known generally.

This foolish and wanton destruction goes on to-day even within the confines of civilization, but mainly in those areas not yet settled by the white man. It is generally the strong and able ones who are destroyed, those most feared by the elders ; those who might dispute their authority. I need not refer here to the methods used to detect the guilty.

You probably know them well, but there are some obscure reasons which often crop up leading to the same end. There is the urge to kill, for instance, which sometimes overcomes a man. I knew of two native friends walking through the bush together, one of whom suddenly killed the other by spearing him and then calmly walked a hundred miles or so into the nearest police station to give himself up. He said he didn't know why he had so acted. Accidents due to misdirected spears have led to the killing of inoffensive bystanders as well as the deaths of the throwers. Women have been speared in raids and individually for the most obscure reasons and perhaps for consorting with the white man. Organized killing at the behest of some elder, himself keeping well in the background, has witnessed the spectacle of the marked man quite unaware of his prospective fate dying with as many as seventeen spears in his body. No one of the killers might thus be held guilty. The natural death of a native police tracker at a police station has led to the demise of another innocent victim. A man expecting his wife to give birth to a child stands armed to kill in the event of either mother or child dying in childbirth. Every artifice known to the elders is employed in a desire to get rid of a supposed enemy or someone whom some old man dislikes, and in which fancied wrongs play their part.

Killing has continued, notwithstanding the steps taken to bring the wrongdoers to justice or point out to the natives the error of their ways. Sometimes the right of the bush natives to punish offenders in their own way has been recognized by us by an attitude of aloofness, justified in some circumstances.

It is difficult to appreciate the extent to which abortion and infanticide have influenced depopulation and what are the reasons for these practices. That both occurred to a considerable extent in earlier days of settlement seems evident, and infanticide could account for the disparity between males and females surviving adolescence. Abortion seems to occur as an economic corollary in times of drought or when long distances require to be travelled, or perhaps when the wrong man has been responsible for the giving of the spirit child. The destruction of female children alive at birth has more significance. The natives witnessed the birth of coloured[2] children after the white man came into the land and did not like it. They saw such children removed by the Government for institutional treatment and thought that their full-blood infants would be so treated. As a matter of fact they never were, unless the conditions were so bad as to warrant such procedure. It has been suggested that the preservation of male infants was recognized as of more value for their cultural possibilities and the greater part they were required later to play as subjects of initiation rites at the hands of their elders. The association of native women with white men often led to sterility. This was mainly in the north. Further south such association was having just the opposite effect, and this accounts for our comparatively large " coloured "(2) population to-day.

The extent to which certain man-making rites have interfered with the birth rate is still a subject for enquiry. Just fifty years ago that great statesman and explorer Lord Forrest expressed the opinion that subincision lessened the procreation of children. He considered it should be discouraged by any influence that was not of a forcible nature. The chief government medical officer of the day, who had lived in the Kimberleys for some years and had attended many natives medically, said he was convinced that subincision *did* lessen childbirth to a very great extent. Dr. Roth, of Queensland, on the other hand, in his

[2] The author uses the term " coloured " to mean " showing evidence of miscegenation."—EDITOR.

ethnological notes pointed out a means by which the natives surmounted the difficulty. But it was generally thought in those days that the practice *was* interfering with the birth-rate and so lessening the number of potential workers in the pastoral industry. In passing, it is pertinent to note that Lord Forrest's suggestion, through some neglect, was never carried out. It was a bigger proposal than those concerned at the time were likely to realize. To-day it would appear that there is a slightly increasing birth-rate due largely to security and oversight and the lessening authority of the elders who are not always able to work their way with youth as formerly. My own observations lead me to believe that something depends upon the degree of severity with which the rite is carried out. We have had men on our Government Native Stations who had been subjected to all the man-making degrees who became the fathers of quite large families showing that in their case at all events the operation had not been of a drastic nature. Unfortunate youth must take his chance of being handled by those who possess a humane streak in their make-up, as against others who in the excitement of cruel blood lust, overdo their part to the lad's detriment. It is difficult to account for so great a difference between the number of adults as compared with children unless subincision has contributed some part to this.

Of all the factors which have retarded natural increase, polygamy has doubtless been one of the chief. It might be thought that the opposite would be the case, but the fact is that many of the older men are past begetting children by the time they have secured a second wife, or even more in some cases. Five is the greatest number I have come across. The Aborigine is old beyond his years. The power of the elders is such that they can acquire female children, some mere infants, and others subjects of pre-natal promises, to the exclusion of the young men brought up beside these long-suffering young girls and their natural mates. The practice is dictated by economic motives more than by desire, and from that point of view is logical but selfish, the object being the physical well-being of the aging and no longer active husband.

To become a man in the eyes of an Aborigine, a youth is forced to go through many tests of endurance and some physical suffering approximating torture. Refusal to conform brings upon him threat of severe punishment and even his permanent deprivation of the society of women. But when the right to acquire a wife is ultimately gained, because of the restrictions caused by the practice of polygamy, he finds it very difficult to do so. It is certainly very difficult for him to acquire a wife of his own choosing. Often he must needs take a woman older than himself, and probably beyond child-bearing, or steal an old man's young wife, a daring and dangerous action generally leading to the death of one or other of the parties and not infrequently the woman. Some of the older wives of the old men will encourage the attentions of youth, and if there are children as the result, it is of no consequence because of the belief that conception is not the result of sexual intercourse but a matter of spirit agencies, a belief now dying but dying hardly. The choice of youth is further restricted by the class marriage system, again influenced by the elders, who arrange such matters. Exogamy is permissible but not always practicable and many difficulties arise which make a young man reluctant to look beyond his own people for a mate. Females with whom it would be proper for him to mate are indeed scarce and becoming more scarce as time passes. Nevertheless breaches of the rules are accorded the severest punishment—even death, sentence being passed by those very elders who ensure that their own needs are first satisfied and in so doing contribute so much to the extinction of the race.

All this has tended to break down the system, but clandestine in addition to some regulated unions still ensure that a few children are born.

Stone age culture of the type I have outlined cannot continue to flourish side by side with modern society. It has become decadent and merely a means of exacting revenge in an endeavour to ensure the elders a continuance of the powers they all along possessed. These things are done to-day not because they are " necessary to salvation," as it were, because the more enlightened natives know perfectly well that they have neither the effect nor results they assumed them once to ensure, yet the old men must still practice them to keep their hold over youth. But youth is learning another way of life and he sometimes objects to conform as of old. Like the half-blood who has already escaped, he sees how futile and useless it all is. The females are beginning to long for release from a system which debases them, brings them little joy in life and to an early death, and largely denies them their natural functions as the happy mothers of children. If the fearsome mutilations of the genital organs in both male and female, the orgiastic accompanying rites, the arranged killings, the blood letting and so on, must remain a part of the life of the Aborigine then all hope of emancipation for the full-blood can be abandoned, and he must go on to his total extinction. The Aborigines have already shown that living under decent conditions they can survive. Under their own way, they must perish ! Sir Peter Buck has pointed out that the Maori Stone Age natives have survived by adapting themselves to the white man's culture and developing their own civilization by adjusting it to the western pattern. The fear of extinction passed with the old tattooed men. The old men of the Aborigines will go in time, indeed they are going fast and their evil ways must go with them. Admittedly, without its baser elements life for the Aborigine is bereft of much of its relish, enjoyment and excitement, yet to progress in our way it must be purged of these elements. It will be a sorry day for the Aborigine when his " Dream Time " fades, as it eventually must unless it can be superseded by that other spiritual and cultural life which we profess. Therein lies our chief difficulty, the bridging of the gap between the Aboriginal way of life and his acceptance of a state of existence comparable with our own. If he loses his ancient beliefs and accepts ours on a purely material basis as there seems every danger of his doing, his way will be long and unhappy, even if he survives.

The gap between scientific research and enlightened administration is gradually closing.

Research must be expedited and completed as far as possible while the new way of life is developing, and there is not much time left for that. By ensuring security, a riddance of haunting fear, the provision of efficient education and even by regulation, the worst phases of the Aboriginal way of life can be eliminated. Some States already possess powers to suppress injurious practices and we know similar evils have been forbidden elsewhere within the Empire.

Indigenous primitive peoples seem to reach a zero hour from which point they are faced either with extinction or their acceptance of new methods which may save them. Our Aborigines have surely reached that stage, and we must see to it that their acceptance of our way of life raises them to new standards of usefulness, health and happiness and the abandonment of all that is evil in a culture which is outworn and often repugnant.

A. O. Neville.

Papua: Social Anthropology. **Austen.**

Notes on the Turamarubi of Western Papua. *By Leo Austen, Dip.Anthr. (Syd.), Resident Magistrate (Retired), Territory of Papua. Continued from Vol. 3, No. 12.*

(iv) Divisions of the Turamarubi Tribes.

Each of the individual tribes of the Turamarubi has its own legend as to how it came into being but the elders of the Morigi tribe from whom I obtained the Baniko legend have embodied in their original legend extraneous matter to account for all the tribes speaking the one language and being looked upon as related by blood. The Nabio, who live near Jukes Point, state positively that, of the Turamarubi, only they and the Morigi originally lived at Baniko on the eastern bank of the Turama estuary. This statement agrees with information obtained from other Turama tribes.

However, in all the legends, the original mother of the tribe was a sow who gave birth to a litter of true men and women. These people lived inside a *Sarua* tree until the sow showed them how to make a long communal house (*darimo*). She then divided the people into groups and each group into clans (*gu*) which were to be matrilineal. The long house was then divided into three sections, viz. the bush end (*nuputamu*), the middle (*turi*) and the saltwater end (*hawatamu*), and these three sections were again divided into subsections to which was allotted an individual tribe each having its own individual clan. These tribes were Wariadai, Umaidai, Nabio, Doriomo, Haragu and Morigi and, following the same order, the original clans were Gai, Asora, Gaidai, Gurahi, Garapi and Nidamodai. To-day, due to intermarriage, most of these clans are found in each tribe, and at the time these notes were collected, the Waraidai were settled near the junction of the Hawoi and Turama rivers at a place called Banora, and the Umaidai at Kesemuba opposite Umaidai Island while a branch of the Umaidai called Auwarubi were living a few miles to the north at Ewaimia. The Doriomo had their long house at Gibu creek, while the Haragu settled on the western side of Morigi Island and the Morigi on the eastern shores of this island. The Nabio lived on the eastern side of the estuary near Jukes Point.

Although in the original tale we find only six original clans among the Turamarubi, to-day there are many others, as can be seen from the following list:

Tribal Group.	*Clan Names.*
Wariadai and Umaidai ..	Asora, Gaidai, Wariadai'ia, Airuai, Garapi, Wariamere, Geme'i, Keme, Gaimere and Gaubi (now extinct).
Doriomo	Gurahi, Mumuki, Iniadai, Uwavihi, and Garapi, Gemei.
Haragu	Garapi, Gemei, and Airuai.
Morigi	Nidamodai, Niamu, Anegu, Parani, Airuai, and Gemei.
Nabio	Gopedai, Gemedai, Aumo, Biama, Gibi, Gowasi.

I was able to get very definite information concerning the formation of Geme'i *gu* among the Wariadai, as this came about through a Wariadai man marrying a woman of the Geme'i *gu* from Doriomo who went to live with her husband and whose children carried on the clan name.

If patrilocal marriages had been the rule, when intertribal marriages took place and the *gu* was then the same as it is now—matrilineal, the result would have been exactly as we find it at present. It is possible, of course, that whole families may have moved from one

long house to another when some trouble arose but to-day the tribes are to all intents endogamous and only exceptional cases occur of intertribal marriages.

The Nabio people, at the time these notes were made, lived in one village on the eastern bank of the Turama near Jukes Point. The long house (*darimo*) was called Adiaum and contained six *gu*, one of which was likely to become extinct. The clan connected with Adiaum is Gopedai, which is not mentioned in the Baniko legend, but the Morigi state that the original clan of Gaidai went across to the other side of the river and formed the Auwarubi section of Umaidai. The Umaidai would not accept the rendering of this tale as told by the Morigi elders, but there is no doubt that about five or six generations ago there were a number of intermarriages between the Umaidai and Nabio, and this may have some bearing on the Morigi story.

In pre-governmental days, it seems to have been the custom for the Turamarubi to build villages more or less on the same site year after year. One could call these the main villages. Other villages are built and occupied for portions of the year, but these are never considered to be permanent quarters. A long house may be built near a sago swamp, but it is not called a *darimo*, and is more often than not called a *bai moto* (sago house). Sometimes a long house may be built far up a creek, but this may be used for only a few months while certain articles of trade which would be used for barter at a later date are being collected. Long houses are sometimes built purely for some ceremony such as the *Epia*, and when the ceremony is completed the house is vacated and never used again as it is now supposed to contain a " dangerous sacredness."

Some of the bush long houses are most useful as hiding places in times of war. Many times have I heard the remark passed that a certain tribe has left its main village and gone to live in the bush. No Turama man would dream of doing this permanently. He is an estuarian, and if he flies to the bush in times of trouble, it is always with the intention of returning to his main village when his fears are allayed.

The Nabio were the only people with a permanent village on the eastern bank. The Morigi lived on Dadebi creek near the south-eastern end of Morigi Island. The village was divided into two by this creek. Owing to frequent fights between the people on this creek, those on the southern side eventually left Dadebi and settled at Gababia and Erehi some miles to the north of Dadebi. The Dadebi people later on began fighting among themselves and I understand have again separated into two, one section of which went over to the mainland north of Nabio.

The Haragu had two long houses on the south-western end of Morigi Island, but the people in one of these moved northward some years ago.

The Doriomo have a long house on Gibu Creek opposite Neabo Island. This creek is the boundary of the Doriomo lands, and south of it were two Baru villages of Nemeti and Paravi. Many generations ago there were many long houses among the Doriomo, but owing to some factions leaving the village and also for other causes, the Doriomo are not as large a community as they were years ago. The Umaidai had their two main long houses at Kese near Sidikoromo creek, while the Auwarubi section built their long houses at Ewaimia, about a mile and a half to the north.

The Wariadai lived in three villages—Banora, Saragi and Hawoibobo. Each village had only one long house, and the front of it was more typical of the Kasere people's homes.

As these people are intimate especially as regards trading relations, with the Kasere, they may have adopted this style of front as a mark of friendship. The long house at Banora is called Maisavi, and though it is possible that the name was taken from the Avisonemi tribe, I think it is more likely to have been taken from the Baru, as there are stories of how various dances were bought by some Banora women from the Baru. It was also found that a number of Baru women had intermarried with the Wariadai. Some of these women were no doubt captured on raids. The Wariadai, being a small tribe, are loth to allow their men to go to other villages when they marry outside the tribe, and the result is that a Wariadai man brings his wife to his own village. The Wariadai also have much commercial intercourse with the Kasere bush tribes of the Hawoi district and the Darai foothills.

(*v*) *Daily Life and Food Production.*

This section was dealt with in my article " Notes on the Food Supply of the Turamarubi of Western Papua," published in MANKIND, Vol. 3, No. 8, pages 227 to 230.

(*vi*) *Trade and Commerce.*

In a district like the Turama where the natural resources for the production of articles of trade are few, trading relations with neighbouring tribes assume an important part in the tribal life. Trading forces a man to form certain friendships. At first it is entered into merely for the sake of obtaining some article that excites his cupidity, but later, as friendships become more solid, an alliance, based on reciprocal trade, tends to become an alliance for purposes of warfare.

One of the most important articles of trade obtained in the Turama is the valuable skin of the watersnake (*Achrocordus Papuanus*). This snake is locally known as *kepusu*, and the skin is used as a tympanum on drum-heads. The length of the skin varies from eighteen inches to three and four feet, the longest and widest skins commanding the best prices. This snake is found only near the sources of the larger creeks on the western bank of the Turama, such as the Gibu, the Sidikoromo and others. The prices paid for various types were found to be as follows :

1 large *kepusu* snakeskin was valued at 2 armshells.
1 small *kepusu* snakeskin was valued at 1 armshell.
1 *kepusu* snakeskin valued at a string of cowrie shells the same length as the skin.
4 large *kepusu* snakeskins were valued at 1 mother-of-pearl breastshell.

In times of peace, the Kerewo tribe was known to have visited the western tribes for the sake of this valuable skin, but as a general rule the trade in snakeskins was done by third parties, except in the case of the Baru, who traded direct with the Doriomo and Umaidai and even with the Wariadai. Thus the former found it to their advantage to preserve friendly relationships with the people on whom they were dependent for such an important commodity. As investigations have shown, Baru women have even intermarried with these tribes, and have gone to live at their husband's village away from their own dialect group. In this way, closer relationships were established, and great advantages were secured to some of these western Turama tribes, who were able to buy head dances, such as the *mipa*, through Baru women living in their midst. These snakeskins travelled westward by way of the Baru peoples and eastward through the Haragu, Morigi and Nabio to the Paibuna river villages and thence to the Kikori Delta.

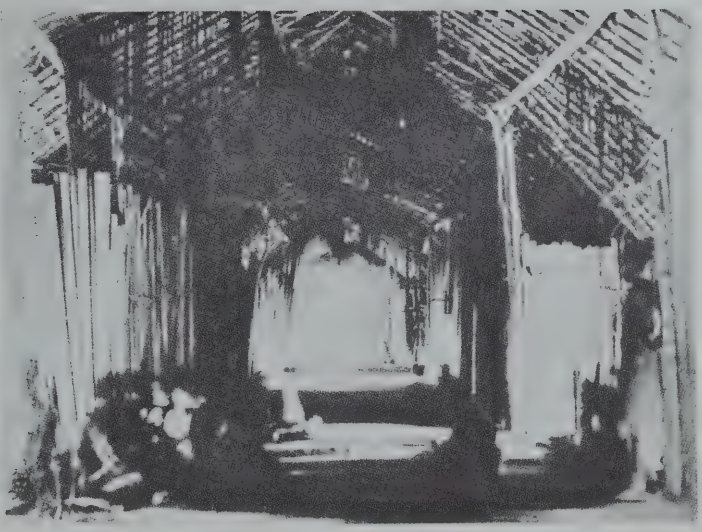

Fig. 1. The interior of the Long House at Umaidai. Cubicles of sago-rib can be seen. Similar entrance at other end.

Fig. 2. End of Long House, showing tama *platform.*

Fig. 1. Side view of Umaidai Long House, showing a family house and also two war canoes and two fishing canoes in the foreground.

Fig. 2. Family houses at Morigi. The Long House is behind these houses. Canoes in foreground in daily use.

The Kerewo people of the Kikori Delta brought from Urama many miles to the east such things as groin shells (*kepa*), shell discs (*bidibidi*) and cowrie shells (*gemubi*). From Urama also came the clay cooking pots (*uro*) which had been traded by the Hanuabada people of Port Moresby, when they came to visit the Urama once a year in their *lakatoi* sailing canoes to buy sago. They also brought with them crescent-shaped breastshells of mother-of-pearl (*mairi*) and the small and large armshells (*mabuowapo* and *pitaromo* respectively). Although the *mairi* and the armshells found their way to the Turama, none of the cooking pots reached that district.

The Torres Strait people send by way of the Kiwai in the Fly River and thence through the Bamu tribes to the Baru, such priceless heirlooms as the true *mabuo*, which is an armshell formed from the greater part of the conus shell. These armshells are considered the most valuable of all articles of trade and this is probably caused by the small supply available. These armshells pass from the Baru northward along the Turama and eastward to the Haragu, Morigi and Nabio and from there they are traded across to the Kerewo. From the west through the Baru also come cowrie shells and breast shells of mother-of-pearl locally known as *hiamu*.

From the *Oberi* bush tribes west of the Turama came the stone axes, now no longer used, while from the Kasere bush tribes to the east the treasured crescent pearlshell—*hiamu*—was bartered southward. These *hiamu* are celebrated in the *Betau Gido* song. No wonder this type of shell is referred to in one of the main songs of the Turamarubi. It comes out of the bush! It is a salt-water shell which comes from the land! Such a freak of nature deserves to be valued. As one would expect, the *hiamu* or, as the Kasere call it, the *yaku* plays a great part in many of the legends of the Kasere and even in the songs of the Turama. These Kasere legends are embodied in the initiation ceremonies of the eastern bushmen. When the youth is informed that the *yaku* comes from a sacred spot near the headwaters of the Hawoi River, he is warned that its position must never be divulged. Legend has it that the *yaku* grows on a tree and can jump or walk from there into the water and travel southward. Having studied the country, and after making innumerable enquiries, I think it is possible that this pearlshell may be found in some old sea-bed of Pliocene times, now forming a valley or basin among the limestone hills or mountains which form the greater part of the hinterland of the eastern and northern banks of the Turama river. As the limestone was probably upheaved in late Tertiary times, this would account for the pearlshell not being fossilized. Certainly, it has hardened considerably in comparison with the ordinary pearlshell of the coastal trade, but it has lost none of its sheen, and many of the shells must have been of greater size than those at present obtained in the Torres Strait. The Kasere naturally keep the large pearlshells for themselves, and there it forms part of a marriage payment. Others are traded southward to the Turama and south-eastward to the Kerewo people.

Dogs' teeth form a very valuable article of trade, and dogs are bred in all the villages. At Umaidai, where there seems to be a host of dogs, I wanted to shoot a dog that was very mangy. Before this could be done I had to buy the dog, for which I paid one tomahawk, one 18-inch knife and some beads. After the dog was shot, the people sent up the death wail all night. It is interesting to note here that the word *umai* means dog, and though I have not been able to get a correct translation of the suffix *dai*, I feel certain that it means " people," not people generally, but those of a certain totem. We see the ending again in Wariadai where *waria* means a " hawk." Here are some payments made for a dog while I was at

Umaidai: (*a*) 1 crescent pearlshell, 1 bead necklace, 6 strings of cowrie shells (each 3 feet long), 1 leglet strung with cowries. (*b*) 1 tomahawk, 1 bead necklace, 1 groin shell, 1 plane iron for canoemaking, 3 feet of cowries. (*c*) 2 strings of dogs' teeth, 2 bead necklaces, 1 groin shell, 4 armshells and 2 mother-of-pearl crescent breast shells. Dogs' teeth also follow the southern route from the northern bushmen, the distributing centres for the east and west being Morigi and Baru.

The Turama, being novices in the art of manufacturing arrows, depend on their bush neighbours for supplies, and the latter also grow large quantities of tobacco, which seems to have originally come down from the north-west.

Thus we see a southern trade route for dogs' teeth, *hiamu*, bows and arrows, and tobacco and previously stone axes, while there is a northern movement for armshells of various sizes, groin shells, *bidibidi* shell discs and cowrie shells and, more important still, articles of European manufacture such as knives, axes, beads and cotton goods which come to the Turama both from the east and the west.

The Turama trades with the Kerewo in order to obtain most of the above types of shells and also European goods in exchange for tobacco, *hiamu*, snakeskins and bows and arrows, and also coloured birds' feathers. He also uses the same articles for bartering for armshells, cowries and recent pearlshell which comes from the west.

Perhaps it is on account of the Morigi's position, with very little trade resources of their own and yet having to act as middlemen on the trade routes, that has made them the pirates of the Turama. One cannot but note the high-handed attitude of these people, and through the generations it seems to have bred a race of bullies who are everlastingly worrying the weaker tribes, and even in their own villages these swashbucklers cannot keep the peace, but are continually fighting among themselves—clan against clan, or even long house against long house. These facts were very noticeable at Morigi, for among the other Turama tribes the solidarity of clans in one long house and the various long houses in a village, if there were more than one, makes a very great impression.

It is difficult to arrive at correct values for exchange purposes, as it depends greatly on what the trader is anxious to obtain. Although there is a great deal of haggling over prices, I never saw any two men come to blows. To-day when they will be bringing in Australian currency, values may be stabilized in terms of pounds, shillings and pence.

Thus we see that the limited number of articles of trade in the Turama has forced these people to form certain alliances with bush tribes which have been of mutual benefit. These alliances were of great value in warfare when the numbers of a raiding party could easily be increased by emphasizing the amount of loot awaiting the victors in some richer or weaker village. Looting was always a strong point with a raiding party and villages would often be sacked so as to obtain trade goods badly needed. Articles of trade such as pearlshell, cowries and other valuable goods are also used as compensatory payments for the death of a person who has been accidentally killed by some one. All the foregoing articles of trade are also used at the marriage contract ceremony.

Part II. A Study of One Village.

(*vii*) *The "darimo" or Long House.*

The outstanding feature of a Turamarubi village is the *darimo* or long house. In any one village there may be one, two or even more of these long houses according to the size of the

population. For the purpose of this section I am taking the village of Kesemuba of the Umaidai tribe as more or less the standard for the Turamarubi as a whole. In Kesemuba, during my stay in the Delta Division, there were two long houses. According to native custom, the long house was purely a men's house, but to-day it has become more of a communal house, even though there are many family houses (*moto*) attached to the main house by platforms or separated from it by a few feet.

The long house is built on piles six feet high above the ground and these are above five inches in diameter, except the centre line of posts, which are usually about nine inches in diameter. The length of the long house varies depending on the number of families or rather the number of male adults occupying it. I have seen some only 150 feet in length, whilst others exceeded 300 feet. The width of a long house is usually static, averaging from 26 to 30 feet.

The posts of the house under the flooring are called *kado*, excepting those under the centre, which are known as *abo*. All the posts of the house are pointed at the end which enters the ground and the top end is either a natural fork or is notched with an axe. These posts are worked into the ground at close intervals, and in regular lines. Where a post is difficult to set, long saplings are tied to it and numbers of men work on it and gradually force the stump down to the required depth. This manner of setting posts also applies to the central ones, as well as to the long *haro* posts referred to later on.

On top of the notched *abo* and *kado* posts, saplings (*gorohera*) are placed, running the full length of the house. On top of these are tied, with split lawyer vines, the transverse saplings (*madigo*) and finally, on top of these, are tied the floor-bearers (*kemigiri*), which run longitudinally. On these bearers are placed the floor-boards (*tea*), composed of wide strips of beaten-out bark from the goru-palm tree. These are placed closely together, but are not tied to the bearers.

One end of the long house is known as the salt-water or river end (*hawatamu*), whilst the other is the bush end or *nuputamu*. Standing at the *hawatamu*, one notices the outside roof-posts (*ahito*), on which are tied with rattan the roof-supports (*kedana*). About two to three feet in from these, another line of high posts is seen (*ma:o*), with their roof-supports (*ma:o kedana*). The main hall which lies between these latter tree-trunks on either side of the house, is supported by great high *haro* posts—those on the left, looking towards the *nuputamu*, being called *haro keo* and those on the right-hand side *haro hapo*. These main house posts, besides having the general term of *haro*, usually have a special name associated with them according to their situation in the house. It is possible, too, that there is some ancestral connection with this naming, for instance, in the two Umaidai long houses, both known as *gibiri*, the *haro* posts were all called *eworo*.

It has been noticed that though the *haro* posts were not carved, they were forked at the top, either naturally or artificially. It appears that the largest of these posts are always notched artificially and these bounded each clan section of the long house. On the forked ends of the *haro* posts, bearers (*haro kedana*) are placed which will hold up the roof, and these run the whole length of the *darimo*. There is a special name for the *kemigiri* floor-bearers close to the *haro* posts and that is *gabuo pe* (literally " the main-hall floor canoe "), for the main-hall floor between the *haro* posts on either side is called *gabuo*. It may be as well to mention here that the joists (*madigo*) at each end of the hall also have a special name—

komotoro. Jutting out from these *komotoro* is a rectangular or triangular platform (*tamu*) which is built in a similar manner to the main part of the long house, but the two outside joists are called *hewahe* and the first *abo* posts are known as *hewahe kema hoguna*. I have called these two platforms *hawatamu* and *nuputamu*, but they are mostly referred to simply as *hawa* and *nupu*.

The rafters (*amimiro*) are fastened at their butt-ends to the *kedana* and, being slightly bent over the *ma:o* and *haro kedana*, meet at the centre of the house roof, forming a line of forks on which light saplings are placed. These form the ridge-pole (*huru*). The rafters, placed about eight to nine inches apart, are tied to the roof-supports and the ridge-pole with split *calamus* vine. On the inner side of the ridge-pole, and attached to the rafters, is another line of saplings called *kaiani tata* (*kaiani* is a " rat ") and pendant from these is a fringe of teased-out sago-leaf.

On top of the rafters are placed thin strips cut from the sago-branch midrib (*i:i*) and these are tied in place with strings from the *calamus* or rattan vine. On these strips the women place a sago-leaf and this leaf is folded and passed around the *i:i* so as to overlap its neighbour. These leaves (*evihari*) form the roof-covering or thatch. This covering is begun at the lowest *i:i* outside the *ahito* roof-posts and gradually is worked up towards the ridge pole, which is made rain-proof by covering with lengths of plaited sago-leaves, each length being the same as that of a mid-rib. This thatch extends over the whole of the long house, including the two end platforms. The coverings last as long as five years. It has even been known to last as long as seven years but usually within five years the *ahito* and *ma:o* posts have rotted and a new long house is necessary.

When the thatch has been placed in position, the Father of the Long House (*darimo abera*) takes up his abode in the partially completed *darimo*. This old man is usually one of the oldest men of the chief clan of the tribe. Before he takes up his position, the people place some of the goru-palm flooring on the bearers and make him a fire place and wall in a portion of the house with sago-midrib. About the time when the thatch is being placed in position, family houses (*moto*) are being erected close to the long house and these are built by a father and his sons or may be by some friends, on payment of pigs.

The space between the outer wall (*kakeha*) of the long house and the main hall is called *iri* and in this space are built the sleeping cubicles. These rooms are walled with lengths of sago-midrib, and the wall facing the main hall is known as *hiwa*, while the other two side walls are called *uro*. A married man's cubicle has a low opening in the *uro* or *hiwa* wall, while a single man, if he makes a compartment for himself, must climb up into his apartment, by means of a clumsy long sapling.

Outside some of the cubicles an unwalled portion of the *iri* is left between two compartments. Here some of the single men sleep or the married men tell their stories beside a mud fireplace. Both in the unwalled portion, as well as in the sleeping cubicles, fireplaces (*momogu*) are built. Small saplings are placed on the floor bearers where no goru-palm has been laid, and on them clay is puddled to a depth of at least nine inches. This fireplace is rectangular in shape, and measures roughtly three feet by five feet. At each corner of the fireplace saplings run from the floor to the roof and, between these posts, two shelves (*ta:aro*) are erected, the lower one being about four feet above the fireplace. On these racks are placed firewood, bows and arrows, lengths of bamboo filled with resin for use as torches, oddments of food, sleeping mats and all the odds and ends that a Turama man finds of value and which

might deteriorate owing to climatic conditions. The erection of this fireplace is usually done by a wife's *mabumere* (classificatory cross-cousin) and, if no family house has been built, the wife spends a good deal of her time, when in the village, in her cubicle and cooks her family meals at the fireplace.

The womenfolk are not allowed to enter the main hall from the end platforms, but an opening is made in the outside wall of the family cubicle and a notched log of wood leaning against the floor at this entrance serves as a ladder.

Between clan sections of the long house, the outside wall is not filled in, and this opening (*dadaudumo*) leads out from the *iri* on to a platform (*waera*) connecting the long house with the clan family houses, or perhaps merely on to a ladder leading down to the ground. When dances are being held, restrictions on the admission of women are lifted to a certain extent and females may carry food along the main hall before the dance takes place.

The two ends of a long house, in from the platforms, are walled with the usual sago-midrib. A very narrow, low opening is left as the men's entrance or exit to or from the main hall and this is made by placing two saplings (*bagara*) between the *haro keo* and the *haro hapo* and cutting out the intervening wall. This doorway (*poso*) is often not more than three feet high and sometimes a shutter made of sago-midrib lies close by to prevent the entrance of intruders and cold winds. Access to this doorway from the ground is gained by a ladder of small saplings or a notched tree-trunk. These rude stairways are placed close to the centre of the outside of the *tamu* platforms.

Other Types of Houses.

The *moto* or family house is constructed on the same principle as the long house, but on a much smaller scale, being not more than 30 feet square and not nearly so strongly built. As I said previously, the family house may be connected with the long house by means of a platform leading from the *moto* to the side doorway of the *darimo*. In places where crocodiles are numerous and where the high tide comes up under the long house and the family house, it is usual to have these connecting platforms for use at night time.

A shelter, *agime moto*, is usually built in the bush not far from the village and is used as a confinement room for clan women. It is very primitive, being merely a lean-to roof of sago-leaves supported on two forked sticks, with a flooring of split but unbeaten goru-palm, and the sides of the maternity house are covered with sago leaves or sago-midrib.

While inspecting two new long houses at Umaidai, I observed what seemed to be a heap of rubbish on the ground under the centre of the long house. I was informed that this was not a rubbish heap, but a *kaina moto* (small house). Looking at it more closely, one could see that it was a shelter. It was made up of a framework of old saplings from some family house and this was covered with old sago leaves from the roof of a disused or tumbled down *moto* and a number of old leaves of the sacred *dracaena*. A very small entranceway led into this shelter. My informant explained that it was "all the same house belong pig" and that a mother took her newly-born child there, as soon as she could walk after the confinement. The mother and child would stay there for some time. This custom is suggestive of the birth of the tribe, who are alleged to be descended from a sow called Aipau and it would seem to be confined solely to the Umaidai and Wariadai tribes. Sacred *dracaena* leaves will be again referred to in connection with the initiation ceremonies (*vide* Part III, Section xii).

(To be continued) L. AUSTEN.

Melanesia: Social Anthropology. **Bell.**

The Narrative in Tanga. *By F. L. S. Bell. Continued from Vol. 3, No. 12.*

MYTHS.

If we adhere strictly to our definition of the *myth* as a narrative form with a purely ritual aspect, a sacred tale told only on solemn occasions, a traditional warrant of authority in all matters having to do with the world of the supernatural, then it cannot be claimed that the people of Tanga are " mythologically " rich. However, they do have a number of interesting stories which fall within this category and which I propose to record in this article. Before doing so, I feel that I should first retail two semi-miraculous legends which are well on the way to becoming *myths* among these people. Neither of these stories is as well known as any of the *legends* recorded above and both of them appear to have an origin well beyond that of the ordinary legend.

The first of these semi-mythological tales concerns a legendary character named Niatelsuk and the totem animal of the Tasik clan : the Sea Eagle (*Haliæetus leucogaster*). The narrator told me that his father, a man of eminence in his day, had recounted the story to him in explanation of a custom which had aroused his curiosity. The custom concerned the fishing habits of the sea eagle (*gosora*). Whenever this bird was observed winging its way across the waters of the reef with a fish in its talons, it was customary to call out to it : *kok teken ! kok teken !*[24] " That fish is taboo ! That fish is taboo ! " whereupon the sea eagle immediately dropped the fish and continued its flight inland. The narrator was told by his father that sea eagles understood human speech since one of their number was once married to a woman of the clan called Korofi. It came about in this way :

" A young Boieng mother had an infant daughter who was afflicted with a large number of small sores (*am pitpit*).[25] One day she accompanied her husband to the garden and laid the child to rest on a nearby stump. The baby began to cry with the pain of the sores and the mother, in an effort to quieten the child, called out to a large sea eagle at rest in a tree close by : ' Hey, Gosora, come and take away this little girl here. She is crying after you.' The eagle merely called out : *' K'ht-k'ht ! K'ht-k'ht !* The mother repeated her invitation and then left the child to assist her husband in the garden. As soon as she was out of sight, the eagle swooped down and, grasping the baby in his talons, flew off with her. The parents saw their child being carried off and the father hurled a club at the eagle but failed to bring it down. Eventually, it came to rest on the top of a very tall tree not far from the garden of the father.

" With the passing of the years, the little girl became a young woman. She married the sea eagle and shared in his diet of raw fish. Eventually, she became pregnant and a few days before her child was born she looked out of her nest and saw her father and mother at work in their garden far below. After her child was born she called out to her father and told him to make up a basket of food for herself and her child. The father told his wife of the discovery of their daughter and of the birth of their grandchild. He then made a very

[24] The literal meaning of the phrase is " fish/which has made contact with the buttocks of a woman." Any object upon which a female has sat is thereby rendered taboo. In the same way, any object which has made contact with the head of a male is taboo.

[25] Characteristic of the first stage of yaws.

long rope and passing one end of it about the point of a long bamboo pole, he placed the pole alongside the tall tree so that the eagle could fly down and grasp it in his talons and carry it up to his nest. The eagle did so and the mother of his wife than made a basket and filled it with cooked yams and kaukau and attached it to the end of the rope. She then called out to her daughter : ' Attention there ! Attention there ! Here is some nice cooked food for you two ! ' The eagle's wife then pulled up the basket of cooked food and her husband wanted to know what it was. She told him to eat of the food and he did so. She then ate some of the food and they both approved of their first meal of cooked food.[26] The mother of the girl then called out to the eagle to let down the empty basket. The eagle obeyed his wife's mother and she placed some more vegetables and a fire brand in the basket, which was then pulled up to the nest. The girl then made up a fire on a wide branch of the tree and prepared a meal. While she was preparing the meal, her husband looked after the baby. Henceforth, the mother of the girl came to the base of the tree each day with a supply of vegetables for her daughter. She sang her song : ' Attention there ! Attention ! Here is some nice cooked food for you two ' (*Ula:tina, ula:tina, buli a:mu pambi*). On hearing the song, the daughter let down the basket and when it was filled, pulled it up again.

" One day, a very ugly old woman named Niatelsuk, having discovered the secret of the girl and the *gosora*, came to the base of the tree and sang the same song as the mother used to sing. However, the daughter looked down and saw that it was not her mother who was calling out and she refused to lower the basket. Niatelsuk then hurled insults at her and told her that it would be better if she left the eagle and married her son. The young woman did not answer Niatelsuk, who continued to upbraid her, telling her that it was not right for her to continue to live with a *gosora*. However, the girl took no notice of these insults and Niatelsuk went away.

" On one occasion whilst the eagle was away from the nest searching for food, his wife and child went to sleep and, in their sleep, they stretched their legs, causing the food basket to fall to the ground. Shortly after, Niatelsuk happened to be passing by and again tried to induce the young woman to lower the food basket by singing the song ' *ula:tina, ula:tina, buli a:mu pambi* ' but as the girl and her baby were asleep, they did not hear the song. Niatelsuk then discovered the basket hanging from the tree by its long rope. She pulled herself up to the nest by her hands and ate up the remains, chiefly bones, of a tree wallaby and some fish which were left over from the previous day's meal. She then called out to the sleeping pair : ' I am here ! I shall eat both of you, yes, both of you, including your buttocks ! ' The young woman woke up and was much afraid of Niatelsuk. She called out to her husband the sea eagle and his companion the fish hawk (*tahgau*) (*Pandion haliœetus*) to come and rescue her. ' Oh you two who are close to the place called Nuris, a snake is here, yes, a large snake ! She then snatched up a burning stick and brought it down upon the hands of Niatelsuk, who fell to the ground. However, the old woman climbed up to the nest again by using her teeth and the young girl again called upon her husband to hurry back to the tree. She picked up another stick and broke all of Niatelsuk's teeth thus causing her to loosen her grip and fall to the ground. Niatelsuk then called out to her : ' You have broken my hands and my teeth, but I still have my buttocks.' She then placed the rope between her nates and with the aid of her feet pulled herself up a third time to the nest. The young woman

[26] For a variant of this tale, see my " Food in Tanga," *Oceania*, XIX.

again called out to her husband to return quickly and he did so, in company with the fish hawk.

" She told him the whole story of Niatelsuk's threats and insults, but the latter denied that she meant to harm the girl and claimed that she only climbed up in order to look after the child. The *gosora* was very angry and picking the old woman up in his talons, he carried her high into the sky and then let her drop. The fish hawk swooped down and caught her and then flew right up into the sky with her. He also dropped her and the sea eagle then caught her and carried her aloft once again. They continued to drop and catch Niatelsuk in this way several times until at last the *gosora* flew up with her and let her fall on to the reef. Her belly (*suksuka*) broke open and the various internal organs turned into bêche-de-mer (*pull*)."

In another version of this tale the sea eagle is cast in the rôle of the mother of the child affected with yaws. " She is discovered washing her child beside a rock pool by a man of the Korofi clan. He goes away, tells his brothers of what he has seen and they then begin to build a very strong house. The corner posts are sunk deep into the earth and the roof and walls are tied on securely with cane lashing. When the house is finished, the brothers go quietly to the rock pool and they see that the eagle stands with her feet on two large *simpenda:lu*[27] and her child also stands on two *simpenda:lu*. As the eagle is washing her little girl, she sings the following healing spell :

Oh, wash my little bird as white as lime !
Yes, wash her as white as lime !
Wash away from my child this smell which arises from intercourse.[28]
Yes, wash my little bird as white as lime !

The brothers then make a loud noise which frightens the *gosora* away. They run up to the pool, gather up the four shell tokens, pick up the little girl and hide themselves inside the strong house. They fasten up the door so that no one can enter. When the *gosora* returns and finds that her child and the four valuable shell discs are missing, she becomes very angry. She flies down to the village and with one kick of her leg knocks down house after house. The settlement looks as if a hurricane had passed by leaving all the houses askew. However, she cannot knock over the house in which the brothers are hiding and is forced to fly away back to her nest without regaining either her child or her shell discs. The little girl grew up and married one of the Korofi men. She was the first *sigin Tasik* (member of the clan called Tasik) and from her are descended all members of the clan called Tasik."

A variant of this myth goes as follows :

" A man of the Korofi clan was reef fishing on Balum, an islet close northward of Babase in the Feni group, when he noticed a sea eagle circling about a nest in a tall tree. When the bird alighted, cries resembling those of a small child arose from the nest. The *korofi* man crossed over to the island of Babase and inquired of an old woman who lived nearby as to the meaning of the sounds which he had heard coming from the eagle's nest. She told him that they were, indeed, the cries of a little girl who had come out of an egg laid by the *gosora*

[27] *Simpenda:lu* is the term used in Feni to describe a particularly valuable variety of shell disc made from the valve of the Giant Clam and known in Boieng as *fat*.

[28] The *pitpit* sores, according to the natives, are the direct result of a child having been fondled by a person who has failed to wash himself or herself thoroughly after intercourse.

and that she was calling out for cooked food. The man then built a house for the old woman close to the beach and adjoining the islet of Balum. She cooked a meal of yams and kaukau and laid them beside the oven to cool. The sea eagle saw the cooked vegetables and without showing any fear of the old woman, she swooped down and took away a cooked yam. She fed her little girl with these vegetables and from then on the old woman provided a daily meal of cooked food for the *gosora* and her daughter.

" When the girl grew up and could no longer eat in comfort in the nest, the sea eagle picked her up in her talons and laid her at the feet of the old woman. Thereafter she lived with the old woman and on attaining nubile years her axillary hair resembled the feathers of her aquiline mother. By this characteristic the people of Feni understood that she was descended from a *gosora*. She married a *korofi* man and became the ancestress of the clan called Tasik.[29] "

The second of these semi-mythological legends also has to do with the character Niatelsuk and her male counterpart Langurut. The connecting link between the two legends is the cannibalistic habits of the characters representing evil and the eventual triumph over them of the characters representing good. Here follows the legend of the Death of Langurut :

" One morning, two young brothers paid a visit to their father's garden and there found a large pig rooting up the yams and kaukau. They chased the pig out of the garden and attacked it with sharpened bamboo javelins (*kus pot*). It was not long before the pig was brought to a halt and the boys then pounced on it and trussed it up. They passed a carrying pole between its fore legs and its hind legs and tried to lift it up and bring it home. However, the smaller brother could not raise his end of the carrying pole. After several vain attempts, the elder boy told his younger brother to make no further efforts to raise the pig. The two lads then dragged it to the base of a tree and tied it to the trunk. The elder brother then told the younger boy to run home and bring back a brand from the fire, but the latter refused to go, claiming that it was too far to walk, to which the elder brother replied : ' Alright, if it is too far to go home, then go and get fire close at hand here, at the house of Telekmukerau, the wife of Langurut.' Langurut was a much feared man who lived alone with his son and killed and ate all who set foot upon his land. His wife Telekmukerau lived in a separate house not far from her husband. The younger boy again objected saying that he did not know where Telemukerau lived. The elder brother then pointed out the way to her house, warning his brother that the road forked some distance along. One of the tracks led to Telekmukerau's place and the other to Langurut's place. The younger boy then asked how he was to know which was which. He was told that near Telekmukerau's house there was a number of yellow *dracæna* bushes growing, whilst near Langurut's house there was a number of red *dracæna* bushes.

" The young boy then departed in search of fire and when he came to the fork in the road, he hesitated and then took what proved to be the wrong track. He came up to the bamboo palisade surrounding the house of Langurut and looking about him, he saw the red *dracæna* bushes and knew that he had made a mistake. Before he could turn back, Langurut caught sight of him and asked him what he wanted. The boy was petrified with fright and could not answer. Langurut then called his son and in a loud voice announced that he was

[29] This myth was told me by a *sigin Tasik* who was a native of Boieng. It is believed that the original home of the Tasik clan was the island of Babase in the Feni Group. To this day, the place of origin of such evil spirits as Tara is believed to be in Feni, 50 miles south-east of Tanga.

going to kill the little boy with shell scrapers (*puk biu*)[30], and then make a meal of him. Langurut's son then brought his father a basket of *puk biu* and the latter again taunted the quivering boy in these words : ' Later on, my son and I shall eat this little visitor with taro and yam.' He picked up two of the scrapers and sang into them :

Langurut, O Langurut, O Langurut !
Langurut, Oh Langurut, Oh Langurut !
Siu ai-ing, i-i-i-i-i-i-ingurut.
Is preparing to eat you.
Langurut, O Langurut, O Langurut !
Langurut, Oh Langurut, Oh Langurut !
Siu ai-ing, i-i-i-i-i-i-popot !
Is preparing to eat you. Whizz-Bang !

As he said ' *popot,*' he hurled the discs at the boy. However, the lad cleverly evaded the flying scrapers and although Langurut tried time and again to hit him, he avoided them all. Two of the shells, having struck a tree near the boy, fell at his feet. He picked these up and as soon as he heard Langurut calling out to his son to get some more *puk biu*, he sang the same incantation over them as he had heard Langurut sing and then hurled one of them back at him. His aim was true and Langurut fell down dead.

" The son of Langurut ran away, calling out to his mother Telemukerau that his father was dead. The younger brother then retraced his steps and came upon his elder brother half-way along the track. The latter had come to look for him since he had been so long away. He asked the young boy why he had no fire with him and the latter told him the whole story of the killing of Langurut. His elder brother refused to believe him but the boy showed him the *puk biu* and urged him to come and see the body of Langurut. Both boys then returned to the house of Langurut and gazed upon his dead body, after which they made their way back to where the large pig was still tethered to the base of the tree.

" The younger boy was again sent for fire, this time to the house of an ugly old woman named Niatelsuk. She gave the boy a brand from her fire and he told her that his brother and he had killed a large pig and were going to make a fire so as to cook and eat the animal. On hearing this, the greedy harridan invited herself to the feast and accompanied the young boy back to where his elder brother was guarding the pig. Whilst the pig was being roasted over the open fire, preparatory to being dehaired and gutted, Niatelsuk devoured the half-cooked knuckles, odd pieces of skin and the ears of the pig. Whilst it was being gutted she lapped up the blood as it flowed from the carcase and even licked the banana leaf mat on which the pig was laid. These were the actions of a dog and the two boys were amazed at her ravenous appetite. They feared that when the pig was removed from the oven they would have little chance of even tasting it, once the old woman began to eat of it, so they sent her down to the beach to fill up a length of bamboo with water. The normal water container (*sun da:n*) consisted of a length of large diameter bamboo with all the interconnecting nodes pierced excepting the bottom one. However, the container which they gave to Niatelsuk had its bottom node pierced also.

[30] These shell scrapers are the single valves of a fresh-water bivalve (*Cristaria plicata*). They are as large as a saucer and the cutting edge is ground to a razor-like sharpness. Apparently Langurut intended to hurl them at the boy after the fashion of the Greek *diskos* thrower.

" Before she left them to fill the *sun da:n*, Niatelsuk warned them not to take the pig out of the oven until she returned. Of course, as soon as she was out of sight, the boys uncovered the oven, packed the pieces of half-cooked pig into baskets and ran home to their grandmother as fast as they could. It was not long before Niatelsuk discovered that the boys had tricked her into trying to fill a container which let the water out as fast as she tried to put it in. She came back to the oven only to find that the boys had left. She ran after them but could not find them. The two boys made another oven, finished cooking the pig, invited their relatives to a feast and told them the story of the death of Langurut."

The three stories which follow and with which this study of the narrative in Tanga is concluded belong to a class apart from the folk tales and legends of these people. In the words of one who was responsible for revealing to us the true nature of primitive myth, they are " a statement of the primeval, greater and more relevant reality, by which the present life, fates and activities of mankind are determined, the knowledge of which supplies man with the motive for ritual and moral actions, as well as with indications as to how to perform them."[31] The natives themselves recognize that these mythical stories are in a different class to the tales and legends. They are known and retailed by the more responsible, somewhat elderly members of the community, not to a crowd of their fellow natives but to individual persons in an atmosphere of semi-secrecy. They have to do with the origin of things which are accepted as basic to their present way of life, such as their totemic beliefs, their principal foodstuffs and their modes of transport. They also concern such fundamental concepts as life and death and the magical procedures which accompany the performance of almost every worthwhile human action.

My first myth has as its subject the origin of the totemic animals and I have named it the story of Longget, Dafal and the Totems.

" A young girl was passing through the ceremony called *dafal*.[32] Her mother did not give her enough food to eat and constantly quarrelled with her. She threatened time and time again to give her in marriage to someone named Longget. One day when everyone was absent from the village, working up in the garden lands, *dafal*[33] escaped from her little house, determined to find this character so often spoken of by her mother—Longget. Everyone she met asked her where she was going[34] and when she told them that she was seeking Longget, they all warned her that she would never find him, that he lived a long way away and even though she were to travel all night and all day, she would not arrive at his place. In this way they hoped to dissuade *dafal* from seeking Longget, without telling her the real reason why she should not try to find him. They knew that Longget was an enormous serpent who dwelt in a huge cavern. However, she was undeterred by their attempts to dissuade her from finding Longget and always left them singing this song :

Oh Longget, Longget, it is you that I cry after,
'Tis you that I sing for !
Oh Longget, Longget, it is you, Longget !

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[31] Malinowski, B., *Myth in Primitive Psychology*, London, 1926, p. 39.

[32] An institution whereby adolescent females are confined within a small cage for up to twelve months. For full details see my " Dafal," *J.P.S.*, XLV, pp. 83-98.

[33] This term is also used as an appellative for anyone passing through the ceremony.

[34] In the tale as told by the native narrator, she meets one person after another who asks her the same question and who is answered in the same fashion. It would bore the reader to repeat each such encounter but the native listener seems to enjoy every detail and a good teller of tales never omits any such repetitions.

" Eventually, *dafal* encountered an old woman who asked her the same question as all the others : Where are you going ? and who received the same reply : I am looking for Longget. The old woman then informed her that she was the mother of Longget. She told *dafal* to sweep out the house and to sleep that night with her. Longget was a large snake with a body as thick as a man and as long as would stretch from Lufunkomo to Aebil.[35] He lived in a cave with a long tunnel which went deep into the ground. When *dafal* awoke the next morning, the mother of Longget told her to sweep the path which ran through the village. She then went to the entrance of the cave where Longget was sleeping and picking hold of his head, she tucked it into her bark belt (*faio*) and dragged Longget from his lair. She walked along the path which *dafal* had swept clean and when she saw the end of Longget's tail emerge from the cave, she turned on her tracks and placed his head so that it rested near his tail. She then pointed to the serpent and said : ' Now you see what Longget looks like. He is evil ! Do you still want to marry him ? ' To which *dafal* replied : ' Yes, he is the man for me ! '

" The mother of Longget then took hold of a piece of sharp bamboo and slit open the tail of the serpent. A number of rats came forth. She cut off a further portion of the tail and a number of pigeons flew out. She continued to cut off further sections of the serpent and at each succeeding cut there came forth the various totem animals of the Tanga. The pigeons were followed by the parrots, by the pigs, by the domestic fowls, by the dogs, by the sea eagles, by the *cuscus*, by the flying foxes and the sea hawks. These animals were then followed by other birds and insects of no totemic significance. Finally when there remained only a small section close to the head of the serpent, the old woman made two transverse cuts and one longitudinal cut and out sprang a human being whose skin was white. His name was Longget and when *dafal* saw him she sang her song once again. The mother of Longget then made arrangements for *dafal* to marry her son. She was formally presented to Longget and they lived together as man and wife."

This creation myth takes hours to tell properly since no detail of the life of *dafal* prior to her escape from her bamboo cage, no detail of the emergence of the various totemic species and no detail of the ceremonies connected with *dafal's* marriage to Longget is ever left out of the narrative. This strict adherence to a complete and detailed account of certain ritual procedures by succeeding generations of myth tellers means that the natives of to-day are in no doubt as to the correct method of carrying out their rites. They only have to refer any doubtful points of procedure to the older men and women who are versed in the mythology of the people. The warrant of to-day's rites is carefully preserved in the myths of bygone years.

F. L. S. Bell.

(To be continued)

[35] Two villages on Boieng Island about a mile apart.

REVIEWS

Aranda Traditions. *By T. G. H. Strehlow. Melbourne University Press, Melbourne,* 1947, *xxii,* 181 *pp.* 17/6 *net.*

After reading this book, there can be no question that the key to a full understanding of the life of a people lies in a knowledge of their language. The basis of any worth-while investigation into the social anthropology of a non-literate, primitive people should be linguistic, and until investigators realize this all work in the field of social ethnography will be, at the best, superficial and incomplete.

No better example of the riches awaiting a field-worker, who is linguistically equipped to reveal them, could be provided than Mr. Strehlow's *Aranda Traditions.* The first part of the book deals with the mythology of the Northern Aranda people of central Australia, the second part with the culture of three Aranda sub-groups, and the final section with the laws governing the ownership and the preservation of the sacred traditions of those three sub-groups.

It may help the reader to understand the quality of Mr. Strehlow's work by stating at the outset of this review that the mythological material upon which the book is based was all recorded in the Aranda language. Mr. Strehlow is able to think in Aranda as well as in English, and in this book there can be no doubt that he has faithfully reproduced both the matter and the spirit of the original language : a language which many of us will be surprised to learn " is an instrument of great strength and beauty, which can rise to great heights of feeling."

The analysis of Northern Aranda mythology which forms the first part of the book is a masterly and sympathetic explanation of an aspect of Aboriginal life which has few equals in our literature. We learn how strong is the bond with which ceremony, chant and myth are bound to tradition and how closely related this feeling for tradition is to the absolute rule of the old men in all matters pertaining to the religious and intellectual life of the Aranda community.

Of all the known groups of Aborigines, perhaps the Aranda " tribe " is the best known, and we have come to regard them as a distinct cultural and linguistic unit. How far we were wrong in thus regarding these people Mr. Strehlow has shown in the section dealing with the Northern, Western and Southern sub-groups. The truth is that there was never any strong feeling of unity in the Aranda " tribe " before the coming of the white man. Their social inter-relations and the distinguishing characteristics of each group, as outlined by the author, leave us in no doubt about this.

Ownership has been defined as the sum of all those rights, privileges and obligations which bind the owner to the object owned and in the last section of the book the author has given us a revealing and ultra-clear account of ownership as applied to the *tjuruŋa* of the Aranda. These *tjuruŋa* are not only the sacred objects of the tribe but the ceremonies, chants and myths connected with the sacred objects. It is not possible to summarize the wealth of information contained in this section of the work, but the author has certainly given us a more than adequate opportunity of appreciating " the principles governing both private and group ownership of the religious traditions treasured by a native community."

The book is well illustrated, carefully indexed, and a craftsmanlike piece of work. However, apart from its physical qualities it is an outstanding contribution to our knowledge of the Aborigines of central Australia and must become " required reading " for all who wish to know more of these people.

F. L. S. Bell.

Music in Primitive Society. *By E. Harold Davies, Mus.Doc., F.R.C.M. Occasional Publications No. 2, Anthropological Society of South Australia, Adelaide,* 1947. 32 *pp.*

This is an essay on the origin and nature of music as a form of utterance. It is the work of the late Elder Professor of Music in the University of Adelaide and represents the mature deductions of an expert in a field of human activity with which so few anthropologists are familiar and about which even fewer are qualified to express an opinion. For these reasons alone we are grateful to the Anthropological Society of South Australia for publishing this attempt to objectify and explain the most subjective of all the arts.

The author proceeds from an analysis of music into sounds and rhythms, with their respective affective and muscular responses, to an account of the design underlying the fabric of musical sound. He distinguishes the sounds of speech from the sounds of music by showing that music has little or nothing to convey of *thought*. Its domain is that of pure feeling. The truth of this statement is adequately borne out by the experiences of the reviewer who, in trying to record the words of certain Melanesian songs, found the utmost difficulty in inducing the singers to speak the words without singing them. To the primitive, the words apart from the music had no meaning. In like manner, the close connection between dancing and singing among primitives explains the importance of rhythm in modern music. " The love of music is largely based upon its unconscious rhythmic appeal."

The question as to whether speech preceded song or song speech is debated at some length and the genesis of vocal music as an art rather than a ritual habit is discussed. This leads on to an analysis of the great discovery that musical sounds could be produced by external agents, that music is something which could be produced from without, that it is not wholly an involuntary and instinctive physiological response.

This finely produced monograph concludes with a consideration of the musical skill of the Australian Aborigine and emphasizes his ability to distinguish pitch and to perceive clearly the " octave relation." The author even attempts to solve the mystery of the pentatonic scale and further intrigues the reader by showing that the Aborigines used certain mathematical ratios in musical composition which were later found to determine all sound relations.

F. L. S. Bell.

A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays. *By Bronislaw Malinowski, D.Sc. University of North Carolina, Press, Chapel Hill,* 1944, *vii,* 228 *pp.*

There are few if any who will deny the truth of Huntington Cairns' description of Bronislaw Malinowski as one of the most brilliant and influential anthropologists who has appeared in the history of that subject. He was a peerless field worker, a great teacher and a true scientist, in the real sense of that term. He loved order and took every opportunity of relating social fact to social theory and in this book, the last piece of work to come from

his pen, he has set forth in his usual brilliant style his final summing up of what we have come to know as " the functional theory of culture."

In the opening chapters, the case is stated for anthropology as the most important of the humanistic studies, as the fundamental discipline upon which any general principles in the field of the social studies must be based. The emphasis all the time is upon the necessity of adopting the scientific attitude in our pursuit of knowledge about man. We must strive always to establish general laws and concepts embodying those laws.

In a critical review of the methods and theories of the past the author provides us with as brilliant an analysis of anthropological work and thought as has ever been written. His chief criticism of past workers is that few if any of them agree upon what are the real and significant elements of a culture. This is the first task of the scientific anthropologist and Malinowski has adopted the concept of the " institution " as the legitimate isolate of cultural analysis. Elsewhere he defines an institution as an organized system of purposeful activities.

Culture is a means to an end. It is the handwork of man and is the medium which allows him to live. It can only be understood as a functional element. But the basis of all cultural responses is a number of basic needs such as appetite, reproduction, bodily comfort, safety, movement, growth and health. In other words biological determinism precedes and governs cultural response.

It is not possible within the confines of this short review to indicate fully the trend of the author's argument or to do justice to the clarity of his style, the logic of his reasoning and the width of his learning. Indeed, we lost an expository genius when we lost Malinowski, but we must be for ever grateful to his editors for preserving and publishing this book, which should become one of the fundamental source books of anthropological method.

F. L. S. Bell.

CORRESPONDENCE, NOTES AND NEWS:

News from Arnhem Land.

Sir:

I am writing this from Umbakumba, Groote Eylandt. The end of June found me on Chasm Island, a high rocky mass dissected by deep fissures and vertical walls one hundred feet and more high. Here I made some most interesting discoveries, recording a total of twenty-five groups of rock paintings and leaving as many to be done. I discovered a new pigment in Aboriginal art—a rich brown, and also a number of engravings which are the first recorded from Arnhem Land. I also had the privilege of recording a group of paintings visited by Matthew Flinders in 1802, the first Australian rock paintings ever to be described. I had to leave Chasm Island two days before I planned because of the movement of various boats, but I persuaded Mountford to go back with me and the photographers and we had a busy and enjoyable three days there.

I also spent a week and a half at the Onguruka Mission whilst I recorded seventeen more groups of paintings, including one with about 200-300 figures. From Jundurruna, Onguruka and Chasm I have close on one thousand paintings recorded on about thirty charts. It was an exhausting and tiring period of three weeks' work and I have spent a day in bed here resting upon my return. I had a fine native named Gulpitja with me most of the time, and enjoyed his company greatly. The Mission boat failed to collect us at Amalipa and the walk to the Mission of nineteen miles over sand and through forest and along interminable beaches knocked us up a little.

The paintings I've got belong to several periods. One series belongs to a wallaby-bird hunting people who used boomerangs and clubs; another series belongs to a Stone Age bark-canoe using people who fished for dugongs, porpoises and turtles, and who later acquired the dugout and metal axes. There is just a little of the ornate surface decoration of the more modern art to be seen in these rock paintings. With the latter and the bark art we have a complete picture of Groote Eylandt art and its development. Unfortunately, the natives profess to know nothing about the rock paintings. However, the records are something tangible.

My work on Groote Eylandt can be summarized as follows: collected specimens; recorded twenty-five genealogies of families so as to trace their totemic relationships; drew charts to scale and in colour of forty-five sites of rock paintings, comprising between 800 and 900 individual paintings; discovered two new colours in Aboriginal art—purple and brown; discovered a number of pecked rock engravings: the first known in Arnhem Land; discovered a number of stone heaps, connected with totemism, on Groote Eylandt; lived with natives in the bush and along the beach and gained experience of their bush life; gained first-hand knowledge of culture contact; studied art in various aspects; obtained records and photographs of techniques used in making various things; observed physique, etc., and participated in the excavation of Makassar graves and Aboriginal camp-sites.

This appears to me to be a satisfactory list and I shall be more than pleased if the mainland yields as rich a harvest.

F. D. McCarthy, Dip.Anth.,
Member of the 1948 Arnhem Land Expedition.

The Aborigines of Cape York Peninsula.

Sir:

The following excerpts from a letter recently received by me from Mr. W. W. Williams, who has an intimate knowledge of the Peninsula and its native inhabitants, may be of interest and value to some of our members.

"I shall describe two methods of catching fish. The first is generally used in a drying, shallow lagoon. A hollow log, one end of which is closed by stuffing it with grass, is sunk in the lagoon. The natives then enter the water and dash about and make a great commotion. The fish scoot into the hollow log and the natives upend it quickly and carry it out on to the bank. The second method is used in a small, deep lagoon. The leafy branches of eucalyptus trees and other such flora are broken off and thrown into the lagoon day after day until the water is deprived of oxygen. I have seen the fish coming to the surface after three days of such treatment and on the fifth day the natives are able to catch the fish by hand and throw them out on to the bank. However, not a fish is touched before the appointed day. A heavy toll of fish is got in this way but this method is only used just before the wet season, when the lagoon will be flooded again.

"The Aborigine is never wasteful, not even in the midst of plenty. We don't possess the art of using fire like the Aborigine does. He never uses more firewood than he needs. I will describe the cooking of a small wallaby which I once watched with fascination, not because of the actual process, which I knew, but on account of the consummate art of the cook. He made his small fire of gum sticks on a nubbley, dry water-course situated far from white settlement. He tossed into the fire quite a number of water-worn stones about the size of tennis

balls. He held the wallaby over the flames so as to burn off the hair, completing the process with a twig. He then pushed the twig into the abdomen, inserted his finger, ripped the skin and expertly removed the entrails, which were then thrown away. One by one, the hot stones were poked out of the fire and picked up with the aid of a small thin piece of paper bark taken from a nearby tea tree. The stones were dropped into the belly of the wallaby and poked up with a stick. The fire, which had almost burned down, was brushed away and the remaining hot stones were raked together into a clean flat hob on which the animal was placed. He then went to the tea tree and removed a sheet of bark about three feet square which he bent over the wallaby. He covered its edges with soil, using his spear as a shovel. It wasn't long before he removed the bark and the animal was perfectly cooked. You or I could have done it, no doubt, but what a wasteful fire we would have made and how long would it have taken us? I watched an artist and was fascinated by his art.

"I am camped out in one of the most beautiful spots I have ever known attending to some land affairs. It is much less onerous than living at home at Kirkleigh. The carpet needs no sweeping here and the food supply is ample because there is good fish in the creek, possums scramble over the tent at night, there are many pigeons in the trees and a fat goanna roams about the clearing looking for scraps. What more can mortal man desire?"

L. P. WINTERBOTHAM,
M.B., B.S.

Grant in Aid of Publication of "Mankind."

Members will be pleased to hear that as a result of representations made to the Premier of New South Wales by the Honourable C. R. Evatt, K.C., LL.B., M.L.A., Minister for Housing and Assistant Treasurer, Mr. McGirr has approved an annual grant of £100 being made towards the publication of our journal. Much of the credit for the success of the Society's application to the Government is due to the untiring efforts of Mr. G. W. Watkins, a member of Council and a former Honorary Secretary of the Society, and to the strong support given to the application by our Vice-President, Professor A. P. Elkin.

A letter from the Premier to the Assistant Treasurer, conveying the news of the grant, is reproduced hereunder by courtesy of the Honourable Clive Evatt, to whom the Society is deeply indebted for his assistance in this matter. By this action, Mr. Evatt has demonstrated in a very practical manner his respect for the Science of Man and his appreciation of the value to the community of a publication devoted to that science.

Sydney,
12 Aug., 1948.
A.48/4695

The Hon. C. R. Evatt,
K.C., LL.B., M.L.A.,
Minister for Housing and
Assistant Treasurer,
Sydney.

Dear Mr. Evatt,

With further reference to your personal representations on behalf of the Anthropological Society of New South Wales (Miss Gwen Bell, Hon. Secretary, c.o. Australian Museum, College Street, Sydney) in support of the Society's application for financial assistance in connection with the publication of its Journal "Mankind," I now desire to inform you that I have approved of an annual grant of £100 being made to the Society for the purpose indicated.

I may state, however, that my approval was given on the understanding that 100 copies of each issue of the Journal will be made available for distribution in Secondary Schools by the Department of Education.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES MCGIRR,
Premier and Colonial
Treasurer.

The Anthropological Society of Victoria

(Founded 1932)

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OBJECTS.

(*a*) To promote the science of Anthropology.
(*b*) To hold biennial conferences of delegates from affiliated societies to deal with matters affecting affiliated societies generally, or the science of anthropology.
(*c*) To take public and official action in the interests of anthropology, as may be deemed desirable.
(*d*) To encourage affiliated societies to co-operate in every possible way.

The Anthropological Society of N.S.W. as such is not responsible for any opinion or declaration published in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless specifically stated to be so by the Editor.

All communications, MSS., and proposed advertisements to be addressed to Mr. F. L. S. Bell, M.A., Editor, Sydney Municipal Library, George Street, Sydney.

Persons interested in the work of the Society please address correspondence to the Hon. Secretary.

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